

Application No.: 09/686,396
Docket No.: HAC 20267

REMARKS

The Applicant has provided new claim 12 for the Examiner's consideration.

New claim 12 recites a brush for cleaning purposes comprising an elongate block of generally cylindrical form; a spigot extending radially from the block, part way along its length; a handle secured to the spigot and a plurality of outwardly-extending bristles secured to the block, including bristles on a region of the block adjacent the spigot, said bristles extending generally in the direction of the spigot toward the handle.

In reviewing the applied patents, the Applicant notes that, in EP 329,938, the brush does not include a spigot extending radially from the block, as claimed in new claim 12. In the '938 patent, the handle joins the brush head at an acute angle between 15° and 60° thus, the '938 patent does not teach a "spigot extending radially from the block part way along its length." Moreover, the '938 does not disclose providing bristles in the region of the block adjacent the spigot and extending generally in the direction of the spigot. As can be seen in the figures, there is a significant separation between the direction in which those bristles nearest to the handle extend and the direction of the part that is being equated with the spigot, or indeed with the handle itself. Thus, the '938 patent does not teach bristles extending "generally in the direction of the spigot toward the handle", as provided in new claim 12.

With respect to U.S. Patent No. 879,754, the "block" is not of generally cylindrical shape, as claimed in new claim 12. Further, there is no equivalent to the Applicant's spigot extending radially from the block part way along its length. Similar to the '938 patent, the bristles do not extend adjacent, i.e. next to, the spigot and are indeed spaced significantly from the portion of the handle that has been equated to the spigot. The separation amounts to approximately two-thirds of the extent of the "block." To that extent, the Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner's previous assertion that the bristles of the '754 patent are located adjacent to the spigot.

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With respect to U.S. Patent No. 5,878,459 to McParland, this patent shows a composite type brush in which there is a head comprising a lower half formed with radially extending bristles and an upper scrubbing pad portion. There is a handle going into the brush head in the region of the scrubbing pad portion through a connection 34. But, the '459 patent does not disclose a structure that equates to a "spigot" extending radially from the block "as claimed in new claim 12. Instead, the alleged equivalent component extends at an oblique angle to the block. As in the previously discussed patents, the '459 patent does not show bristles adjacent to the spigot extending generally in the direction of the spigot toward the handle, as claimed in claim 12. Referring to Fig. 3, there is a significant separation between the bristles and the spigot and the spigot portion extends from the middle of the scrubbing pad portion. Moreover, the bristles do not extend generally in the direction of the spigot. As shown in Figs. 2 and 3, they extend radially from the block where as what has be equated to the spigot extends at an acute angle to the axis of the block.

Consequently, it should be appreciated that the brush of the present invention provides a novel and nonobvious structure where the provision of bristles adjacent to the spigot and extending in the direction of the spigot enable a brush to be provided that is especially effective in the cleaning of confined spaces, such as under the rim of a toilet bowl. This structure is not shown in the prior art and because prior art machines used in securing the bristles generally have components of such a dimension that they cannot access the region immediately adjacent the spigot. The Applicant's apparatus, as described and claimed, allows bristles to be arranged adjacent the spigot, thereby yielding the novel brush as defined in the claims.

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In light of the foregoing, the Applicant believes that claims 1-6 and 12 are in condition for allowance and respectfully requests notice of the same.

Should the Examiner wish to discuss any of the foregoing in more detail, the undersigned attorney would welcome a telephone call.

Respectfully submitted,



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